

had found champions long before Buchanan. Nor is the " De Jure" a profound study of the science of government such as his contemporary Bodin was engaged in elaborating, and Machiavelli had given to the world fifty years before. Our author is no political philosopher, no comprehensive student of history. Compared with Bodin or Machiavelli, he must indeed appear superficial. His mind moves within a narrow compass. It is only fair, however, to bear in mind the special purpose of his tract. Its object was to vindicate, from reason and Scottish history, the revolution of 1567, and it would certainly have failed of its purpose and effect had its author lost himself in the maze of speculation. It is the work of the publicist, not of the philosopher, and it was meant to be this. In answer to the prejudiced critics of these Scottish revolutionists, Buchanan emphasises the fact that peoples have rights as well as kings, and are justified in certain contingencies in vindicating these rights on practical grounds, apart from any theory of divine right or traditional prescription. Even if the Scottish constitution was not two thousand years old, and even if the compact, as an invariable explanation of the origin of kingship, was an assumption of the theorists, Buchanan could adduce from Scottish history precedents in support of his thesis. The theory of the inviolability of kings and the responsibility of ministers might have afforded a safer solution of the problem. But the theory was not yet established as a working expedient, and in this particular case it is difficult to see how the queen could have imputed the responsibility for the marriage with Bothwell and its inevitable consequences to anybody but herself and her criminal husband. There are cases in which even the theory of the responsibility of ministers (supposing it to have been understood) will not work, and this was certainly one of them. Mary allowed Bothwell to use a show of force to compel her to a scandalous and intolerable act, and yet, despite the universal denunciation of her subjects, she refused to give him up. She had by her own act made herself absolutely impossible as ruler, and, in such a contingency, arguments based on tradition or sentiment lost any force they might have had over the minds of her opponents. This, it seems to me, is the strong point of Buchanan's disputation. His doctrine of tyrannicide might easily lead to the